

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

ADDIS ABABA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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Fundamental of web and development

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# The History Of Internet(The evolution)

The idea of a ‘resource-sharing’ network first emerged in ARPA in 1966 (Naughton [1999](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619), 84). Design work, conducted in a collegial style (Abbate [1999](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619), 56) unusual in the defence industry, then proceeded over the next two years. The contract to build the network was awarded in early 1969 to Bolt, Beranek and Newman, a Boston-based consultancy firm with strong links to MIT.

The technological and conceptual challenges that faced the network's designers have long been obliterated by the omniscience of hindsight, but they were formidable.[7](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619) Given that the network was supposed to facilitate the sharing of expensive and scarce resources, namely the mainframe computers that ARPA had funded in various research centres across the country, a key obstacle to overcome was the fact that these machines were incompatible with one another. For each of them to participate in a network would require the creation of complex, customised networking software which would enable each machine to communicate with every other machine on the system. In the end, this problem was not so much solved as side-stepped: it was decided to build a ‘sub-net’ of identical minicomputers (which came to be called ‘interface message processors’ or IMPs) each linked to a single mainframe ‘host’. In that way the task of writing networking software for a host was greatly reduced: it would simply have to communicate with a single machine – the IMP assigned to it.

Given the technical challenges implicit in the task, the ARPANET was built with astonishing speed. By 1972, the network was essentially complete; the 15 original sites were all connected and operational and a major public demonstration of the system was held in Washington, DC in the Autumn of that year (Hafner and Lyon [1996](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619), 176–186).

From the perspective of the present, three aspects of the ARPANET project stand out.

The first is that while it was a triumph of project management in the conventional sense, success was achieved in an unusually collegial way. This was sensible for several reasons: the network was intended to link high-profile researchers working in elite institutions, and such individuals are not easily herded, plus it made sense to harness the collective IQ of that community at every level, including that of graduate students. For that reason, for example, design of the central protocols of the network was entrusted to a Network Working Group that largely consisted of students. In this way was established the collaborative ethos that has been an important feature of Internet technical development up to the present day.[8](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619)

Secondly, the ARPANET provides an interesting case study in the extent to which technologies are socially shaped. In this case, the shaping was done by the network's users, first of all because many of them were actively involved in the design of the network and therefore they were both designers and ‘customers’, that is, users. And in the latter capacity, they sprang some major surprises on ARPA managers. The network was intended to be a facility for resource-sharing, but it transpired that it was not much used for this original purpose. Instead, its users employed it mostly for communicating with one another, sharing files and software, and for sending and receiving email (Abbate [1999](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619), 108). In that sense, the community of users came up with a new conception of what ‘networking’ meant – not so much the sharing of *machines* as the linking of *people*. As Abbate puts it, ‘Increasingly people within and outside the ARPA community would come to see the ARPANET not as a computing system but rather as a communications system’ (Abbate [1999](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619), 111). Given the technical sophistication of the network's users, it is also not surprising that they were vocal in their demands for system modification and innovation. But while many user tweaks were ‘encouraged or at least tolerated’ by ARPA, the agency did not always welcome users’ attempts to steer the evolution of the system (Abbate [1999](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619), 93). Its reluctance in this respect may not have been due to hierarchical reflexes so much as the need to reassure Congress that the network was not a publicly funded experiment in computer science, but an administrative tool useful for military and defence purposes.

## The ARPANET: 1967–1972

Thirdly, although the ARPANET was based on the packet switching technology that characterises the modern Internet, it was a *unitary* network: the subnet of identical, centrally managed IMPs constituted the core of the system. And the network was owned and administered by a single entity – ARPA. So although the ARPANET was the precursor of what came later, it differed in significant ways from its successors.

The origins of the **Internet** date back nearly 40 years, with the U.S. military's funding of a research network dubbed Arpanet in 1969. ... The number of computers connected to the **Internet** has grown exponentially, while the number of users has risen from a handful of computer scientists to 1.5 billion consumers

Previously US defense computers were connected to each other in a one way fashion such that each computer was connected to the others in series. In case of one computer being destroyed all others would lose communication. To avoid this the government decided to connect the computers in a web with each computer connected to all others. The motivation was to connect the few then existing proprietary computer networks to one interconnected network. The first version of the Internet was called ARPANET and was implemented in 1969. It then consisted of 4 Nodes in UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, Stanford Research Lab, and the University of Utah. It was to be the predecessor of what is today called the Internet.

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